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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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18
ROUTINE
IN 34133

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CITE

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DIST 14 NOVEMBER 1968

COUNTRY JAPAN RYUKYU ISLANDS

DOI

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SUBJ CONCLUSION OF PRIME MINISTER'S COMMITTEE THAT NUCLEAR
BASES ON OKINAWA NOT MILITARILY NECESSARY FOR UNITED
STATES DEFENSE IN THE FAR EAST

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SOURCE

1. BY EARLY NOVEMBER 1968 PRIME MINISTER SATO EISAKU'S QUASI-
OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON OKINAWA HAD REVIEWED THE PROBLEM OF AMERICAN
MILITARY BASES ON OKINAWA AND HAD CONCLUDED IT WAS NOT NECES-
SARY, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF MILITARY STRATEGY, FOR THE UNITED
STATES TO MAINTAIN "NUCLEAR" BASES ON OKINAWA. THE FINDINGS OF

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OF THIS GROUP

"BASES SUB-COMMITTEE"/, UNDER FORMER JAPANESE

NAVY CAPTAIN KUSUMI TADAO, WEIGHED HEAVILY IN THIS DECISION.

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[REDACTED] AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS UNIT, WHICH IS ONE OF THE TWO SUB-COMMITTEES, KUSUMI IS INFLUENTIAL IN THE COMMITTEE'S ACTIVITY.) THE COMMITTEE BELIEVES, THEREFORE, THAT EARLY REVERSION OF OKINAWA TO JAPAN, WITH AMERICAN RIGHTS TO BASES UNDER THE SAME CONDITIONS AS NOW APPLY TO THOSE IN JAPAN, IS NOT ONLY DESIRABLE POLITICALLY, BUT MILITARILY FEASIBLE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF JOINT JAPAN-AMERICAN DEFENSE NEEDS.

2. MOST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WERE ALSO PLEASED WITH THIS CONCLUSION BECAUSE THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT UNLESS OKINAWA IS RETURNED TO JAPANESE SOVEREIGNTY AT AN EARLY DATE, THE EFFECT OF A DELAY IS LIKELY TO BE "DISASTROUS" ON JAPAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS. [REDACTED] THE GROWING NATIONAL "SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS" AMONG JAPANESE IS A PRINCIPAL, AND USUALLY OVERLOOKED, FACTOR STIMULATING THIS DEMAND FOR REVERSION, AS WELL AS LEFTIST AGITATION.) THEY FEEL IT IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO FORESEE ALL THE UNFAVORABLE CONSEQUENCES OR THINK OF HOW THESE CONSEQUENCES MIGHT BE FORESTALLED. MOST OF

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THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, WHO REALIZE THAT JAPAN NEEDS THE UNITED STATES AS MUCH OR MORE THAN THE UNITED STATES NEEDS JAPAN, ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE OKINAWA PROBLEM. THEY BELIEVE THAT, IF THIS PROBLEM REMAINS UNSETTLED, IT COULD POLARIZE PUBLIC SENTIMENT IN JAPAN SO STRONGLY AGAINST THE UNITED STATES THAT EVEN AUTOMATIC RENEWAL OF THE SECURITY TREATY IN 1970 COULD BE JEOPARDIZED. THEY FEEL THAT AT A MINIMUM THIS PROBLEM WOULD STIMULATE GREATER AND MORE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO THE UNITED STATES MILITARY PRESENCE IN JAPAN. [REDACTED] THE COMMITTEE'S CONCLUSIONS ON NUCLEAR BASES HAVE BEEN MADE KNOWN TO PRIME MINISTER SATO, AND THEY PROBABLY WILL CARRY GREAT WEIGHT, BUT SATO'S REACTION IN TERMS OF FORMING ANY NEW POLICY ON OKINAWA REVERSION IS NOT KNOWN. THE RESULTS OF THE OKINAWAN ELECTION WILL INTENSIFY PRESSURE ON THE PRIME MINISTER TO PUSH BOTH FOR EARLY REVERSION AND FOR LIMITED BASE RIGHTS. IN EFFECT THERE IS NO CHOICE FOR EITHER THE PRIME MINISTER OR THE UNITED STATES, SINCE SHOULD THE UNITED STATES MAINTAIN A RIGID POSTURE ON THE NUCLEAR BASE QUESTION, IT WOULD RISK LOSING JAPAN AS A COOPERATIVE PARTNER IN DEFENSE MATTERS.)

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3. [REDACTED] CINCPAC PACFLT PACAF ARPAC STATE ARMATT
NAVATT AIRATT USFJ NSAPAC/J COMNAVJ NISOJ 5AF 6499SG 500MIG
USARJ DET4/FTD [REDACTED] ~~GP 1~~

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